

Learning together

Paying Attention to Punctuation

ACTIVITY #7

SEQUENCE: STRATEGIES WHILE READING —
UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT 2ND CYCLE - PRIMARY

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Purpose of the activity

In the previous activities (#4, #5 and #6), we learned different strategies for reading words. Now we will discuss strategies to understand a text when reading. The objective of this activity is to take into account punctuation marks to adjust your reading and check comprehension.



Relevance of the activity

In order for your child to understand the essence of a paragraph or text, they must be able to understand each sentence they read. One of the strategies to achieve this is to take into account punctuation marks to adjust and check their understanding.



Supplies

To do this activity, you can use the the texts in the appendix

■ *A Voyage Through Forests and An Unforgettable Excursion*

You can also use:

- the school texts that your child must read
- a book at their reading level



LET'S GO!

Explain the activity:



Today, we will pay special attention to punctuation marks in a sentence to adjust and check our comprehension.

Explain why:



In writing, punctuation marks play a very important role. They are symbols (. , ? ! : " " -) that give us clues about

- the way the ideas in a sentence or paragraph are organized,
- the rhythm,
- the intentions and emotions that the author wants to share with us.

Punctuation marks allow us to imagine how the author is telling us the words and how the characters in a story interact with each other.

Explain when:



This simple strategy can be used when reading and writing. Identifying and using punctuation marks are two essential strategies to facilitate understanding.

Try it together:



As you know, there are different punctuation marks.

Earlier, I explained that these marks are represented by symbols that give us different types of clues.

Here are a few examples:

- **Structure:** A capital letter and a period mark the beginning and end of a sentence, or of an idea. These punctuation marks also help us to depict the organization of ideas into a paragraph.
- **Pause and rythm:** The comma tells us to take a short break, because the author wants to draw our attention to a word or group of words within a sentence.
- **Intentions and emotions:** Exclamation marks and question marks are used to express enthusiasm, astonishment, uncertainty or other emotions, while ellipsis marks (...) may indicate a pause, or hesitation or create suspense.
- **Organization:** Dashes and quotation marks, are used to introduce and report dialogue between characters, which helps differentiate between characters' speaking and the narration of the story.

Let's take two different texts to explore these different punctuation marks and discover how they can help us in our understanding.

1 Let's start with the text "A Voyage Through Forests," which is an informative text. (See appendix)

As you can see, different colours are used to highlight punctuation marks. When we get a quick overview of the text, we can observe the presence of capital letters and periods, as well as exclamation marks and question marks. This gives us the following clues: The author wants to make us react and is asking us directly so that we feel concerned.

Let us take the paragraph on tropical forests as an example.

- I'll read it aloud and tell you what's going on in my head.

You see, these punctuation marks not only serve to tell us the beginning and end of a sentence, but they allow us to put ourselves in the author's shoes, to think about how they are conveying ideas to us.

2 Now let's take the text "An Unforgettable Excursion" as an example. (See appendix)

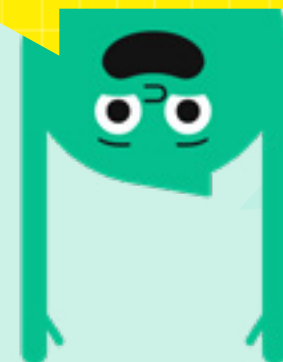
This is a narrative text. As you can see, I used the same colours to highlight the punctuation marks. You may already notice that there are new punctuation marks: quotation marks. This gives us the following information: There are interactions and exchanges between the characters in the story.

Let us take this paragraph as an example.

- Narration (the first sentence is the author who is talking) and dialogue that is marked by quotation marks (the last two sentences).
- I also notice the presence of an ellipsis: They give us the following clue: The character is leaving us in suspense.

Quick tips!

Now you know that punctuation marks play an important role in understanding what you read. Remember to pay close attention to these clues the next time you read a text.



A Voyage Through Forests

Dear Adventurers, come and discover our beautiful forests!
Forests are like large families of trees, each with its own mystery.
Slip on your boots and get ready for an incredible adventure!

Rainforests

Welcome to the rainforest! Imagine you are walking through a **jungle** where the trees are so high that they block the sun's rays. Here, there is a lot of shiny foliage. Did you know that rainforests are located **near the equator**, where it is always hot and humid? They are home to exotic animals such as monkeys and colourful parrots. Unfortunately, tropical forests and the animals that live in them are not immune to deforestation.



Boreal forests

Now imagine a forest where the trees are covered with sparkling snow. Also called taiga, the boreal forest is found in countries where it is very cold, such as **northern Canada and Russia**. In these forests, we find **conifers** such as fir, spruce and tamaracks. Because of climate change, snow is melting earlier, affecting the growth of trees and shrubs, as well as the way of life of the animals that live there, such as black bears.



Temperate forests

We end our voyage in the temperate forests. Here we find **conifers**, but **also hardwoods** such as maple and birch. This type of forest is found in **Europe and North America**. The colour of the trees' leaves changes with the seasons, putting on a spectacular show, especially in autumn. Throughout the year, you see different species of bird, squirrel and deer. Temperate forests are increasingly affected by forest fires because the weather is warmer and there is less precipitation.



Lastly, forests give us fresh air and are home to a wide variety of animals, both big and small! They're the lungs of the Earth. By taking care of our planet and planting trees, we can help protect these beautiful places for generations to come.



See you soon for another adventure,
Jean Bouleau

An Unforgettable Excursion

In a small clearing in the heart of a boreal forest, three friends, Elizabeth, Malik and Lucas, have gathered for an unforgettable excursion.

Elizabeth, a nature lover, adjusts her boots in excitement. "Wow! Look at these trees, they're gigantic! It's amazing to be in the middle of this boreal forest!" Malik, camera in hand, nods his head in agreement. "Yes, it's really spectacular! Imagine everything these trees have seen over the years." Lucas, the most adventurous one of the group, smiles. "And all these animals that live here in this snowy forest. I would like to see a wild black bear!" Elizabeth shudders slightly. "You know, black bears are beautiful, but it is best not to get close to them. They are wild animals and they feel threatened by the presence of humans." **Malik points his camera to a tree covered with snow. "It's so peaceful here... I could spend hours admiring the beauty of this forest."**



Suddenly, a sound of footsteps in the snow attracts their attention. A curious red fox appears then disappears immediately among the trees. Lucas, amazed, exclaims, "A fox! That's awesome! I can't wait to see what the rest of this incredible adventure will bring." Elizabeth smiles. "There is so much to explore. Forests are like open books: they are filled with mysteries to discover."



The group starts moving again, their hearts filled with excitement for the adventures to come in the different forests of the world, ready to create unforgettable memories in the heart of nature.